

**FROM FR. MARK:**

Easter Sunday and the following seven days present a special time to bask in the glory of the resurrection, which are known as the Octave of Easter, culminating in the celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday (also known as the Second Sunday of Easter).

Starting from at least the 3rd or 4th century, Christians began to extend certain feasts beyond the initial day. This meant that the joyous celebrations of Easter Sunday were prolonged and lasted a full eight days.

In fact, Christians treated each day in the octave as if it were Easter Sunday. This tradition has been preserved by the Roman Rite and many of the Eastern Rites, where the liturgical readings and actions of each day mimic what happened on Easter Sunday.

The St. Andrew Daily Missal further explains the connection the Easter Octave had to the newly baptized members of the Catholic Church:

The Octave of Easter, during which formerly no servile work was done, was one continual feast. Each day the neophytes attended Mass at a [different church in Rome], at which they received Holy Communion. In the evening they went to Saint John Lateran for the Office of Vespers. Furthermore, the newly baptized would wear their baptismal gowns during the entire octave. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, the Second Sunday of Easter "was consequently known as dominica in albis (deponendis), the Sunday of the (laying aside of the) white garments."

While these particular baptismal traditions are no longer practiced by the Catholic Church, the Octave of Easter remains a celebratory time for Christians around the world and is meant to be a joyous time to remain in the beauty of the Lord's resurrection.

As with the way Christmas is celebrated in the Catholic Church, the Easter season only begins with Easter Sunday. It is a season for feasting, praising God and enjoying the company of family and friends.

Gone are the fasting days of Lent! (Even the weekly Friday abstinence, which many Catholics practice all year long, is suspended on Easter Friday.) Now is the time to feast!

We welcome Lindsey Ochs into our parish community as she receives the Sacrament of Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil celebration.

Thank you to all who have made our Holy Week and Easter celebrations prayerful and holy.